10.
ARCHAEOLOGIES OF THE PRESENT AND MUSEUMS OF THE FUTURE, OR HOW TO OPEN UP THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HERITAGE AND THE COMMON GOOD

Antonio Lafuente & Paz Sastre

Few territories have been more explored than the province whose boundaries are demarcated through the concepts of museum, heritage, technology and the market. Therefore, it will never stop being paradoxical that we do not have an explanation for a surprising and symptomatic phenomenon: 18th century museums not displaying exceptional assets, but rather stones, bones, shells, feathers, maps, models, microscopes, looms, ploughs…What are these ordinary things doing in a museum? They are in the museum to reconfigure the sign of the times, to invent a common past and present. Enlightened people call into question the boundaries of the social by disorganising the arrangement of things in an open space.

Things are not distinguished from new technologies mobilising them as, for the first time, independent objects from individuals and inherited uses. The ordinary is analysed, dated, localised, classified and preserved, making the museum a truthful house of the (new) commons. These things evoke a common inherited world (Lafuente & Valverde 2008). Rocks, for example, bear testament to the processes of crystallisation of inert matter; that skeleton evokes any shortcut of the planet's history; and that fabric speaks about the technical level of a remote community.

Everything is as common as it is relevant. Its relevance is acquired, and implies the movement of new cognitive instruments, from barometers and test tubes to pressing and classificatory system, to labs, expeditions, lounges and awards. By the same token, erudite people discovered the role of technologies in producing objects and getting into an agreement. Things are now re-encoded.

However, to allocate attributes is to valorise and to price objects in the new market of civilising objects which grows, while the culture of wonders is substituted by the wonders of culture. Hence, a pleiad of collectors, connoisseurs, merchants and assessors emerged, along with a group of amateurs who were part of the Royal Society or scientific expeditions. To allocate attributes and price things are not two different movements and, although they are separated in time, both are related to each other by the state and the market, as the drift of common goods towards their heritagisation evidences (Miller 1987; Strathern 1988).

In one of the most striking scenes of Denys Arcand's Oscar-winning Les Invasions barbares (2003), a priest deals with a young American antiques expert who wants to buy chandeliers, altars, oil paintings of the Sacred Heart and plaster casts of polychrome virgins, among other religious objects, piled up in the basement of the Montreal archbishop.

In the movie, the decline of religiosity forced many churches to close and to sell excess items to maintain other churches. The merchant, however, coldly replied that the American market is filled with French sacred objects, and only 18th century chalices should interest her. Ultimately, these objects had stopped being part of heritage, and had turned into trinkets that

were difficult to manage. Simply put: the Quebecois ecclesiastical heritage is worth nothing, not even as an anonymous witness of the handcrafted past, or as symbol of national identity.

To maintain the value of things entails hair-raising costs, and requires an army of restorers, engineers, artists, sponsors, buildings and researchers, as well as protocols, standards, and agreements, all mediated by the heritage enterprise. Will there be experts for all museums? Will there be a market for all artefacts? Will there be members of the public visiting all the buildings? Heritage is doubtlessly a bulimic enterprise.

To answer all these questions, and to put forward a few new ones, we have divided the argument in three parts. First, we refer to the process of making the commons invisible after the two main heritagisation processes: the 19th century liberal process and the 20th century neoliberal process. Second, we address the current rediscovery of common goods, which always takes place in the margins of the state and the market. Third and lastly, we present our conclusions and leave an open door to ask ourselves: what spaces should be kept to look after new heritages?

The visible and invisible hands of heritagisation

It has been already mentioned that enlightened people discovered the simultaneity between the task of re-encoding society and things. What is most novel in this connection between common goods and new technologies is in the sociability they open: the certainty that consensus, balance and social peace are a matter that can be solved through tools, numbers and maps.

But new republics massively absorb common goods, including those that cannot be displayed in a museum. To revalue the quotidian entails a technical process whose high costs are to be met by the state. Memory, health, education and security stopped being common matters and state heritages emerge. The encroachment of the common good gave birth to the public issue. Hence museums, which emerged to become the house of commons, dramatise the values of the new social contract (Linebaugh, 2008).

Museums, universal exhibitions and big public works created the illusion that the state itself could showcase itself as a huge technological spectacle (Nye, 1962; Bennett, 1995). There is also a trend privileging art museums, which supposes a transit from the common to the exceptional, from the ordinary to the ingenious, and from the objective to the aesthetic (Duncan, 1995).

This encroachment transforms the ordinary into a synonym of old-fashioned, residual and primitive. The public issue, instead, is modern, radiant and efficient (Deloche, 2001). Therefore, there is nothing surprising in the objects within the museum being subject to all the fluctuations of identity rhetoric. Liberal heritage depreciated the common good.

After the Second World War, the crisis of the modernity project stressed the interest in mixing up the common within the limits of the public. Accumulated inconsistencies in the World Heritage List as coordinated by Unesco motivate the search for new definitions of heritage.

However, experts do not solve existing asymmetries, and the highly exclusive character of the works inclu-

ded within the list are there due to their "outstanding universal value" (García Canclini, 2010). The objectives of arguing for the democratisation of heritage, promoting an alleged duty towards memory, and reclaiming immaterial, marginal and natural heritages have turned the heritage crusade into a bulimic enterprise—unbearable and eventually in need for private resources to guarantee its funding.

The de-museumisation, de-artefactualisation and de-expertisation, along with privatisation, mass use and globalisation, have turned heritage into a resource at the service of the leisure market. The second wave of heritagisation, the neoliberal one, mixes in an irreversible way the public and the private, and transforms green tourism and cultural tourism into the real drivers of heritage. Hence, support for concepts such as the Disneyisation or McDonaldsisation of heritage increases by day.

Explorers of the common good

The privatisation of the public, as Ostrom revealed, does not solve social, political, economic and cultural tensions created through the heritagisation of the commons either. Both Long Tail economies, social innovation and corporate social responsibility can cannot stop the systematic proliferation of discriminatory minorities and marginalised majorities.

The common does not result from an expansion of the public. The common always emerges where the state and the market are supported, were life continues through different management methods: self-management, resistance, cooperation, counter-hegemonic, or an original combination of the above.

The public issue, when it works properly, has too much work with the production of protocols, standards and distributive policies. It could be said that the state issue is designed to ignore the local issue (what is situated), the peripheral issue (what is unique), and minority issues. The state machine does not know where and how to look at these emerging territories. The state fails, and the market more so, when it wants to set confusing philanthropic-capitalist projects in motion, or more recently, projects of social innovation.

To understand what is common we need artists, or maybe a special and old-fashioned variety of artists (Spieker, 2008). To find what is common, explorers must be sent to the limits of heritage, beyond the public and the private, as the enlightened people did with their explorers in the confines of the empire, beyond what was known and closer to what was wonderful. By that time, there was also a proliferation of new actors, new media and new technologies. Similarly, by that time, amateur culture found a gap to influence what was formal and inherited.

Hence, we would like to review the strategies of some travellers who are going deep into the new unknown territories of modernity—one that can only be imagined as incomplete, imperfect, unfinished, partial, disoriented, fragile and temporary. A fragmentary modernity whose ruin hides even in the margins between the public and the private.

Some contemporary projects are acting as sensors of the new tensions between heritage and the commons. These projects are disorganising the distribution of the ordinary in the public space or, as has already been said, they are (re)programming objects and producing other visualisations.

Megafone.net, produced by the artist Antoni Abad, mapped 13 emerging territories from 2003 to 2012 with the support of different groups. These territories are: the territories of Mexico City's taxi drivers, young gypsies from Lerida and Leon, sex workers in Madrid, the disabled and blind in Barcelona, Geneva and Montreal, Sao Paulo motoboys, Nicaraguan migrants in Costa Rica, displaced people in Colombia, Saharan refugees in Algeria, and immigrants in New York. Each group live constructs its own objects through a smartphone connected to the graphic interface of the website, reorganising the public and symbolic space through their own stories (Martín Prada 2012; Parés et al. 2014; Tisselli 2014; Oliverio 2011).

In 2000 the group of artists, educators, activists called REPOhistory ('repossessing history') produced its last public project of maps after having worked since 1989 (Constanzo 2000; Collado & Rodrigo 2010). Titled Circulation, this project conceived the whole city of New York as a huge organism and explorative space to research a less well-known aspect of the city's physiology: daily distribution of human blood, from blood donors to blood banks, hospitals, receptors and clinics. This chain constitutes an efficient and invisible circulatory system which extends itself over multiple points, both local and globally. The project studied the political economy of blood material, from sanitary (illness transmission, surgical resource, etc.) and market (experimentation of new uses, altruistic motivations, racial connotations) perspectives. This liminal assemblage of human and non-human actors creates a space for exchanges which is experienced as common.

After the visit to New Orleans in 2006, the artist Mel Chin discovered that the town was one of the most

polluted in the whole country, with alarming rates of lead in blood for up to 50% of the urban child population before Katrina (Abaroa 2013:37). The estimated cost to clean the whole town was approximately $300 million. The artist designed and coordinated the project Operation Paydirt/Fundred Dollar Bill Project to raise the money for that aim. Schoolchildren from all over the country participated in the project, drawing 100 dollar notes. Once all the drawings are collected, they will be handed over to the US Congress in exchange for the real amount required to remove the lead in the soil. The project has been going on for nine years and has extended over the national territory due to the participation of students, professors, scientists and politicians.

These examples reveal the existence of new objects and means of exchange, with hitherto unknown territories emerging. These examples are not antagonistic, but counter-hegemonic. Worlds embedded into the one we are living in, new hybrid ways of sociability which demand the artist's gaze and the archaeologist's practices (González Ruibal, 2012). An archaeology of the present should be able to show what many artists, converting themselves into warning sensors, experience as new encroachments of the common (Boyle, 2003).

These examples could be three archaeologies of the present (Harrison, 2012) testifying to the imminence of new heritages now qualified as expanded, because they were the fruit of participation and convergence of both experts and victims. They also shape new anonymous heritages and hybrid spaces, where the common and heritage come together, the public and the private.

There is more. Every day we find on the internet new experiences born where modernity fades or, even worst, is completely absent. These second experiences are not designed through pre-planned participatory strategies by an artist from an interdisciplinary group, but instead they are designed in transversal networks of collaboration, which are weaved in a spontaneous and self-managed way. This happened in New Orleans when Katrina hit, exhibiting the shortages, asymmetries and spatial injustices which had been buried under the image of the romanticised creole, joyful town, the capital of jazz. Katrina is not part of the past, it is everywhere. All of us, we know, are waiting for Katrina.

Fukushima is a unique case in point. After the tsunami and the nuclear fusion of several nuclear reactors, an informative shutdown took place. From Big Data to No Data. The Japanese government and Tepco, the company that owned the nuclear plants, tried to keep up appearances by giving incomplete and non-systematic reports in PDFs which irritated several governments. The Japanese crisis became global.

Several groups of hackers, including members of Tokyo's hackerspace, designed, founded, made and distributed a counter to measure radiation in record time. This counter was based on open source protocols and hardware. Data was standardised, as well as processes of compiling, filtration, normalisation and processing in Pachube.com (now Xively.com). This is an internet platform which, combined with Ushahidi.com, started to produce the visualisation of radiation in real time which showed up the energy company and public administration (Plantin 2011). One year later, in 2012, Safecast.org received honorary mention

under the category of digital communities of the Prix Ars Electronica Festival.

Citizen journalism in conflict areas is another example of these emergent practices (Al-Ani 2012). Over the last few years of war against drug barons in Mexico, social media has become once again a device for public security, which covers informative voids of governmental institutions and traditional media, such as the press or TV (Monroy-Hernández et al., 2013). Microblogging services such as Twitter become alarms about hotspots where potential or effective violent scenes occur—shootings, police operations, etc.—to allow citizens to avoid them and protect their personal integrity by using alternative passage ways. Anonymity and press production at real time allow citizens to act as the mass media, complementing official reports and local press services. What has just been commented about new production regimes of knowledge and sociability in the city can be extended to the body itself.

Braintalkcommunities.org is other example of decentralised networks which map a completely unknown territory. Composed by psychiatric patients tired of pills and interested in improving their quality of life, these communities have organised a huge clinical trial. The goal of this trial is to communicate what these patients experience to identify likely symptoms, tentative medicines, side effects, advisable treatments, and then, to set off a movement meeting several conditions, among them, to test all hypothesis, to try to maintain the experiment open and to keep the conviction that no response will be definitive.

They are not communities for mutual support oriented towards the exchange of encouragement and well-intended phrases; they are real learning commu-

nities that also produce contrasting knowledge (Hoch & Ferguson, 2005). There are studies that test the epistemological and organisational relevance of these 'research-in-the-wild' projects as dubbed by Michael Callon (Callon & Rabehsrisoa, 2003).

Many have highlighted that these are not participative initiatives improving the functionality of institutions or the strength of our knowledge, but instead they are self-managed enterprises. These enterprises name and construct a common, post-anatomic and post-liberal body which is open, distributed, democratic, objective, inalienable and recursive (Kelty, 2008). The aforementioned examples are remarkable, and show that newly constructed assets (free-radiation air, a secure city and sovereignty over the body) are inconceivable without the infrastructures supporting the community which mobilises it, and vice versa.

New cartographies and other heritages

Situated in an incomplete or absent modernity, these archaeologies disorganise the social space and hack it to map unknown territories, by transforming them into graphic interfaces which sustain and are sustained by the permanent circulation of gifts among their users.

Unlike the first two cases where the expansion of heritage is determined by a heterogeneous set of mediators, the other examples are characterised by the reclaiming of new heritages which emerge out of the direct mediation of communities of people affected. It is an archaeology which does not live out of unearthing fragments, but out of revealing the living assemblage of common, shared and non-exclusive assets.

These assets are codified as dynamic and liminal objects mapping counter-hegemonic territories, and not just expanded heritages. It is not just about putting forward participative dynamics of governance. The new common appears there, where the recursive assemblage of assets and concerned communities are not distinguished from the technologies that mobilise them.

While scientific maps live on the inhabitants of a territory and their cartographer, the interface's viability completely depends on the survival of the community. If the exchange of gifts ceases, the object assembled fades away, carrying with it the space produced by its multiple itineraries.

Nowadays many museums, especially those devoted to contemporary art, work with expanded heritages, which end up forgotten in their wine cellars. However, contrary to what happened during the illustration, we lack in physical infrastructures that can function as spaces for the new commons. The museum, for the moment, may not be able to turn into an interface housing objects as disproportionate as toxic air; objects that do not exist outside their use and the individuals mobilising them. But sooner rather than later, we will have to build a space capable of protecting the new commons without heritagising them.